

605 SIMMONS AVENUE (HOUSE)
Charlton/Wilkinson Impact Area
Milledgeville
Baldwin County
Georgia

HABS No. GA-2247

HABS
GA,
5-MILG.
10 -

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SOUTHEAST REGION
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

605 SIMMONS AVENUE (House)

HABS No. GA-2247

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GA,
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10-

Location: 605 Simmons Avenue
Northeast corner of Simmons Avenue and Charlton Street
Milledgeville
Baldwin County
Georgia

U. S. G. S. Milledgeville Quadrangle (7.5)
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:
17.291700.3663060

Significance: The house at 605 Simmons Avenue is a representative example of early-to-mid twentieth century worker's housing in an African-American Milledgeville neighborhood. The vicinity developed in response to both the coming of the railroad in the late-1800s as well as to turn-of-the-century business and industrial growth nearby. This property is also important for its association with Dr. Julian F. Boddie, a prominent black physician in Milledgeville during the first half of the twentieth century.

Description: The house at 605 Simmons Avenue is a one-story, side-gable dwelling with a massed floor plan and a partial-facade, integral front porch with squared wood posts. The original portion of the structure measures 30'-4" in width by 23'-6" in depth and consists of three rooms. A small, partial-width shed addition on the rear now accommodates a bathroom and an entry porch. All original windows are six-over-six double hung sash. The house rests on a brick pier foundation and the roof is covered with raised-seam metal. The exterior of the dwelling is sided with weatherboard.

The interior of the house contains two fireplaces, one in each of the two rear rooms, both lacking mantelpieces. The original hardwood flooring is intact but has been covered with linoleum, some of which has been subsequently removed.

The house is in poor condition on the exterior and interior and is vacant.

History: The subject house was constructed circa 1935-1945 by an unknown builder and was probably first owned by Dr. Julian F. Boddie, a prominent black physician in Milledgeville, and his wife, Mrs. Clyde Boddie. The Boddies are not thought to have ever actually lived in the dwelling; they resided at 341 N. Liberty Street (approximately three blocks to the south) and kept the subject house at 605 Simmons Avenue as rental property. The house first appears on the

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps in 1949; the next earliest Sanborn map is from 1926 and does not show the house, indicating that it was definitely constructed after 1926. Architectural characteristics of the building suggest that it dates from the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s.

Dr. and Mrs. Boddie were well respected members of Milledgeville's black community. Dr. Boddie's office was located at 130 Wayne Street in the town's historic black business district and he served the black community as a physician for over forty years. Dr. Boddie's significance in Milledgeville is evidenced by the City honoring him with the naming of J.F. Boddie Middle School, originally an all-black high school established in 1956. His son, Dr. Alonza N. Boddie, lived nearby on Gwinnett Street and also practiced as a physician in Milledgeville for several decades.

The subject property is located in a historically black working class neighborhood located just north of the Baldwin County Courthouse and Georgia College. The existence of this neighborhood can be attributed to several events, the first being the arrival of the Georgia Railroad in the late-nineteenth century. The railroad line was constructed just two blocks north of the 600 block of Simmons Avenue and the depot was located three blocks to the east. An industrial district developed in the vicinity of the railroad and provided employment opportunities for many blacks. From the 1920s to the post-Second World War era, the neighborhood experienced considerable growth as industry expanded. Milledgeville Ice Works, Milledgeville Cottonseed Oil Company and Mills, The Cook Lumber Company, Fowler-Flimister Coal Company, Oconee Clay Products Company, and the Georgia Railroad Power Company are just some of the businesses that developed near the railroad. Milledgeville's black business district, which, like the railroad and the industrial area, provides nearby economic opportunities, is located to the east of the Baldwin County Courthouse.

The subject property has remained under ownership of the Boddie family and is presently owned by the heirs of Oteele C. Boddie. Clyde Boddie Murphy of Buffalo, New York, is the contact heir.

Sources:

African-American History File. Georgia College Library, Special Collections, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Baldwin County Deed Records, Baldwin County Courthouse, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Baldwin County Tax Records, Baldwin County Offices, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Black Heritage Tourism File. Milledgeville/Baldwin County Tourism and Trade Department, 200 West Hancock Street, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Campbell, Paul, telephone interview, 1 February 1993, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Campbell, Paul. "City of Milledgeville Community Development Block Grant." Unpublished paper, Georgia College, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Dexter, Pete. Paris Trout. New York: Random House, 1988.

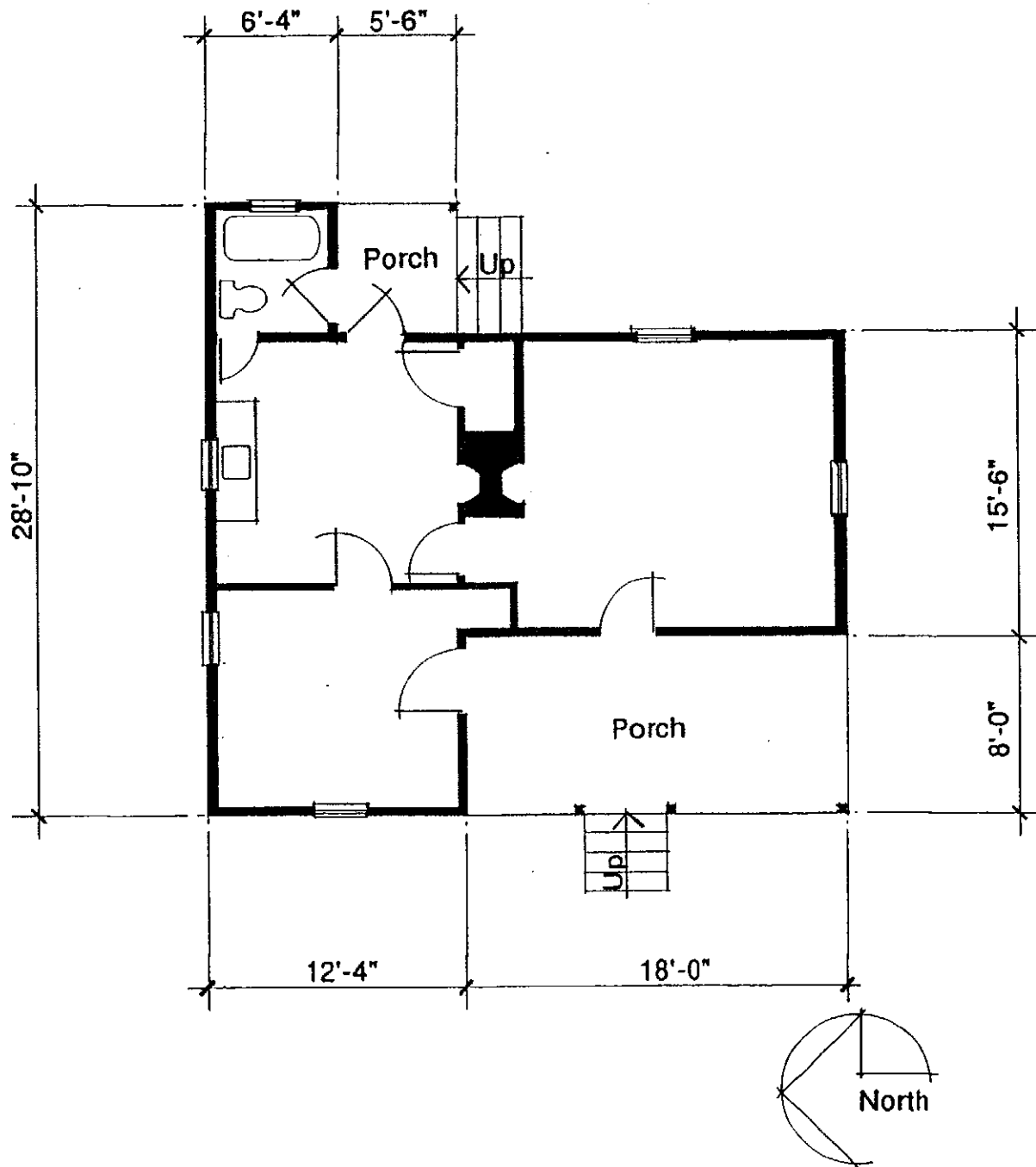
Milledgeville City Directory, 1939, 1949, 1956-57, and 1966. Located in Georgia College Library, Special Collections, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Milledgeville, Georgia, 1889, 1895, 1908, 1913, 1949. Located in Georgia College Library, Special Collections, Milledgeville, Georgia.

Watkins, Rodney, Georgia State Historic Preservation Office, telephone interview, 2 February 1993, Atlanta, Georgia.

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CITY OF MILLEDGEVILLE
1990 C.D.B.G. PROGRAM
CHARLTON/WILKINSON IMPACT AREA

